

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 7-A

WASHINGTON TIMES
15 October 1986

U.S. order firm: 25 Soviets must leave

By Richard Beeston
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The United States has informed Moscow that the U.S. order last month expelling 25 diplomats from the Soviet U.N. Mission in New York stands and that all the personnel must leave the United States.

If Moscow makes good its threat of retaliation against the expulsions, U.S.-Soviet relations, following the failure to achieve an arms control agreement at the Iceland summit, will take another turn for the worse.

The State Department said that "as a gesture of goodwill" the five remaining diplomats who had not yet left by yesterday's deadline would be permitted to stay on until Sunday to catch the next scheduled Aeroflot flight.

[A State Department official at the United Nations said last night the Soviet Union had complied with

the U.S. order, The Associated Press reported. The official said the Soviet U.N. Mission had told the Americans the five Russians permitted to stay until Sunday would "be out by tonight."]

U.S. officials have said that all 25 have been engaged in espionage, and two of them were reported to be the local heads of the KGB and the GRU at the New York mission.

The State Department said the expulsions were being made "out of a genuine desire to protect our national security." They are part of a larger U.S. plan to reduce the Soviet U.N. missions by 40 percent to 170 diplomats by April 1988.

The original expulsion order was made on Sept. 17 at the height of the crisis over the arrest of U.S. News and World Report Moscow correspondent Nicholas Daniloff, and the diplomats were given until Oct. 1 to leave.

During the negotiations over Mr. Daniloff, the deadline was extended until Oct. 14, and there were reports the United States was reconsidering a few of the names.

At a press conference in New York, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said that "major retaliatory steps" would be taken unless the order were revoked, and that the issue would be discussed at the Reykjavik summit.

The State Department said yesterday, however, that the expulsions had not been discussed in Iceland, and that "the Soviets have said they will comply with our request." A spokesman said, "We do not believe this action should impede our broader relations with the Soviet Union."

Soviet retaliatory steps would presumably mean the expulsion of American officials from the Soviet Union.

STAT